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R 021328Z MAR 07
FM AMEMBASSY MONROVIA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 8143
INFO RUEHZK/ECOWAS COLLECTIVE
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 0258
RUEHCN/AMCONSUL CHENGDU 0010
RUEHGZ/AMCONSUL GUANGZHOU 0038
RUEHGH/AMCONSUL SHANGHAI 0006
RUEHSH/AMCONSUL SHENYANG 0010

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 MONROVIA 000289

SIPDIS

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STATE FOR AF/W-PDAVIS, AF/RSA-DEPSTEIN, INR/AA-BGRAVES

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TAGS: [EAID](#) [ECON](#) [EFIN](#) [PREL](#) [CH](#) [LI](#)

SUBJECT: LIBERIA: US/CHINA DIALOGUE ON AFRICA

REF: A. STATE 24937

[1](#)B. MONROVIA 00282

[1](#)C. 06 MONROVIA 01553

[1](#)D. 06 MONROVIA 00707

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Classified By: AMBASSADOR DONALD E. BOOTH FOR REASONS 1.4 (B) AND (D)

[1](#)1. (C) In general, Chinese assistance to Liberia tends to be well-publicized one-off contributions of goods, technical assistance, infrastructure, and exchanges, rather than sustained donor engagement in strengthening specific institutions or sectors. Since 2003, China has provided peacekeepers to the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) and currently has approximately 528 troops in Liberia, primarily engineering units dedicated to providing support for military projects and infrastructure improvement. China has granted Liberia duty-free access to its markets for exports and has agreed to cancel Liberia's matured debt up to the end of 2005, which amounts to US \$11 million. Chinese Political Counselor told Poloff February 2007 that, during President Hu Jintao's February 1 visit to Liberia, China committed to providing US \$1 million (Foreign Minister told Ambassador the amount is \$1.5 million) in cash to the Liberian Government, which the Liberian Government will be free to spend as it deems most appropriate.

[1](#)2. (C) Agriculture: In 2006, China donated 630,000 hand-held farm tools, valued at \$1 million. Chinese agricultural technical assistance teams have conducted training at Booker [1](#)T. Washington Institute, a tertiary-level technical training institute. In September 2006, the Chinese Government also donated US \$250,000 worth of farming equipment, including tractors and harvesters, to the Booker T. Washington Institute. We are discussing with the Chinese Embassy the possibility of a joint effort to establish bamboo furniture production; China would provide tools and training on furniture making while the U.S. would provide training to help the artisans establish viable businesses.

3 (C) Health: In 2006, China donated anti-malaria medication, as well as other pharmaceuticals to the Ministry of Health. The Chinese Government runs a military hospital in Zwedru in Grand Gedeh County that provides services to Liberians. Chinese Political Counselor told Poloff February 2007 that his government will set up an anti-malaria treatment center in Monrovia's JFK Hospital, which should be up and running in approximately 3 months.

[1](#)4. (C) Education/Exchanges: China provides scholarships for

Liberian students to study in China and agreed to increase their number during the February 1 visit of President Hu Jintao. In February 2007, Chinese Political Counselor told Poloff that most Liberian scholarship recipients have studied "practical" subjects, such as rice production, computers, short-term medical training, and accounting. He also said cultural exchanges will be strengthened and that a "Confucius Center", a language and cultural center, will be opened in Liberia.

¶5. (C) Infrastructure: Chinese companies are renovating the building housing the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Samuel K. Doe sports stadium. The Chinese are reportedly also working, through an Ivorian company, to clean up the telecommunications building. Chinese Political Counselor told Poloff February 2007 that China will provide a US \$10 million grant for rehabilitation of the University of Liberia Fendell campus, which will be used for a dormitory, faculty housing and fencing, and will build 3 schools in rural Liberia at locations yet to be determined. The U.S. will rehabilitate classrooms at the University of Liberia's Fendell campus and this is being portrayed by the Liberians as an example of U.S.-Chinese cooperation in support of Liberia's reconstruction. In November 2006, he told Poloff that China and Liberia had entered into a Memorandum of Understanding to renovate and expand the Liberia Broadcasting Corporation in order to allow it to broadcast throughout Liberia.

¶6. (C) Security Sector: The Chinese Government provided computers to the Ministry of Defense and, in 2006, pledged approximately US \$600,000 in logistical support to the Ministry of Defense in the form of computers, generators, radios, and vehicles. China also offered assistance in the future rebuilding the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL). The Chinese gave computers to the Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization and provided 20 motorbikes (without spare

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parts) to the Liberia National Police. In September 2006, 25 Liberian Special Security Service (SSS) agents traveled to China for 4 months of training. Minister of Defense told DATT March 1 that Liberia accepted China's offer to provide medical training to the AFL.

¶7. (C) Commerce: The Chinese Embassy has financed trips to China by Liberian Business Association delegations to enhance trade ties. The Chinese Ambassador actively promotes investment by Chinese firms in Liberia in the following sectors: resource exploration (especially oil exploration), rice production, livestock, fishing, and infrastructure. There are Chinese fish mongers at Monrovia's port and a number of Chinese-run restaurants in the capital. Chinese Political Counselor told Poloff November 2006 that during President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf's October/November 2006 trip to China, Liberia and a Chinese company, which is not state-owned, entered into a "very general" Memorandum of Understanding regarding renovation of the Liberian port of Buchanan.
Booth